

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 16-21 remain in this application. Claims 1-15 have been withdrawn in response to the restriction requirement, but without prejudice to Applicants' right to present such claims in continuing applications.

1. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 16 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brundage et al. (US 6,365,259) in view of Kawazu et al (US 2005/0169834A1).

Respectfully, the rejection is traversed. The combination of Brundage et al. (US 6,365,259) and Kawazu et al (US 2005/0169834A1) does not render the claimed invention obvious. In particular, Examiner is directed to para. 32 of Kawazu wherein it is indicated that the thus-obtained *formed body* of the at least partially hydratable alumina may be maintained in the presence of water at a temperature of from about 110°C to 200°C. Thus, even if there were some suggestion in the art to make the combination, the claimed invention would not result. The present claim 16 requires the mass to be heat treated prior to the step of forming (extruding) the body (See claim 16, para d., requiring "extruding the heat-treated mass"). Contrarily, Kawazu teaches the *formed body* should be heat treated, rather than the plasticized mass. Accordingly, the combination does not render obvious the claimed invention.

Claims 18-21 are allowable for at least these reasons.

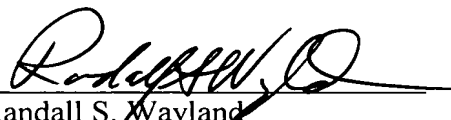
2. Conclusion

Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of records, Applicants believe the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Applicants believe that a one month extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely. Should Applicants be in error, Applicants respectfully request that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Randall S. Wayland at 607-974-0463.

Respectfully submitted,



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